

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, January 18, 1876, with transcript

Letter from Miss Mabel G. Hubbard to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Hartford, Tuesday, Jany. 18th. 1876. My dear Alec:

Thanks for your letter received this afternoon. I am glad you like your rooms, I should seriously advise you taking up the carpet if it were practicable, I know by experience how much more comfortable one feels when there is no danger of hurting anything around about, I can work much better at Miss Johnston's than at home for that reason.

As for the rest of your letter, I know there are, and suppose there must even be differences of opinion between us on some perhaps important points. I have no wish to pry into any part of your heart which you do not want me to see, and I fully believe there are some things only between God and one's self. How far a wife had a right to come in I do not know, nor can at present try to decide. I am afraid you give me credit for more earnestness on this as on every other subject. Everything I have only studied very superficially, never gone down to the depth. And when I wrote to you I was thinking principally of the want of confidence and sympathy that it seems to me must exist between two people of different beliefs. But just now I am in rather a hurry and cannot collect my thoughts sufficiently to speak of this important subject. As for your not having had time to speak to me about these things before our engagement. Before that, when I was down in Nantucket I knew you were not orthodox in most of your beliefs, in fact I went further and believed you an atheist. So you see I had not to learn that you were worse, but better than I thought. Yes it is a privilege to live, but I think it would be perfectly dreadful if we had no hope after this life. This is so short and so full of sorrows, and it would be miserable to live on after a loved one had gone, and to feel that the parting was final, that there would be no meeting again. When all our interests are closely bound upon the earth it would be so dreary to

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look forward to the time when as Prof. Procter tells us the earth will be dead, to think that there is an end to all. It is so glorious and comforting to know that there is something after this, that everything does not end with this world.

If it were right I should almost wish to know how far you agreed with me and how far not. Now I do not and I do not know how far I can go with you, I don't know but it seems as if perhaps I had a right to know so much. For I may imagine you are further away from me than I think, and there may be danger of a wall growing up between us which may separate us. I don't know whether I ought to say all this, perhaps I ought to be content that we agree on the most important point, belief in God, still I cannot help thinking it would be well I knew just how far we went together, I should feel surer and freer in speaking of these things with you. Not that I want you to lay bare the inmost recesses of your heart nor to give me your reasons for dissenting from received dogmas, only to say which of them you do dissent from. And now if I have said too much or asked too much, forgive me, and tell me what you think about it sometime when we are alone together.

I have not been out since Sunday, it has been raining and the fog is so thick we can barely distinguish the opposite houses. I shall be so glad to see you, come as soon as you rightly can, and do all your business thoroughly before you come to me, I should never let you go away if you came before so don't forget. Mamma writes that she leaves New York Wednesday by the ten o'clock train. She said your letter to 3 Grandma was beautiful.

With Much love, Your, May. Josie says "put in that Mamma and Papa will be most happy to see him at dinner Friday." We had best take the three o'clock train from here as that would be the most convenient one for them, they dine at one. They would ask you to spend the night here, but I was glad to say I only knew you were coming late at night. It might have looked as if they were obliged to ask you here.